Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, EG, IS, US

SUBJ: U.S. PUBLIC POSTURE ON ISRAELI RESPONSE TO OUR QUESTIONS

1. FOLLOWING IN PARA. 2 IS PRESS GUIDANCE WE WILL BE USING IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT USG REACTION TO ISRAELI CABINET'S RESPONSE TO OUR QUESTIONS ON PEACE PROCESS. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT USG SOURCES NOT RPT NOT BE CITED AS CHARACTERIZING ISRAELI RESPONSE IN ANY WAY. WE RECOGNIZE THAT IT MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR EGYPTIANS TO EXERCISE SIMILAR RESTRAINT, BUT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THEY NOT RPT NOT SAY ANYTHING THAT CLOSES DOOR ON ANY AVENUE WE MAY FEEL IT NECESSARY TO PURSUE, PARTICULARLY POSSIBILITY OF OUR CALLING FOR MEETING INVOLVING SECRETARY, DAYAN, AND KAMEL. WE APPRECIATE WORD WHICH JUST ARRIVED IN CAIRO 15292 THAT EGYPTIANS IN PRINCIPLE ARE PREPARED TO

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ATTEND SUCH MEETING PROVIDED INVITATION COMES FROM PRESIDENT CARTER.

2. (BEGIN TEXT). DURING THE LAST VISITS TO WASHINGTON OF PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN, WE PROPOSED THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT CLARIFY ITS POSITION ON

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TWO QUESTIONS REGARDING THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. DURING AMBASSADOR ATHERTON'S LAST VISIT TO CAIRO AND IN SECRETARY VANCE'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL IN NEW YORK, WE PROPOSED THAT THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT PROVIDE ITS SPECIFIC VIEWS ON HOW THE ISSUES RELATING TO THE PALESTINIANS, THE WEST BANK, AND GAZA COULD BE DEALT WITH IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. WE HAVE HELD A NUMBER OF USEFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE EGYPTIANS.

WE HAVE NOW RECEIVED THE ISRAELI RESPONSES TO OUR QUESTIONS. WE WILL BE CONSULTING WITH EACH SIDE ABOUT HOW TO PROCEED ON THE BASIS OF THE ISRAELI RESPONSE AND THE VIEWS DEVELOPED IN OUR EXCHANGES WITH EGYPT. AT THIS STAGE, WE ARE NOT GOING TO CHARACTERIZE EITHER THE ISRAELI RESPONSE OR THE EGYPTIAN VIEWS. (END TEXT)

3. FOR AMB. LEWIS: AS YOU CAN SEE, WE WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT NOT TO REACT UNTIL WE HEARD DAYAN'S FULL EXPLANATION. OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS, AND OUR TENTATIVE VIEW IS THAT WE WILL HAVE TO TRY ANOTHER ROUND DESPITE FACT THAT ISRAELI RESPONSES DO NOT GIVE US AS MUCH TO WORK WITH AS WE WOULD HAVE LIKED. IN YOUR MEETING WITH DAYAN, YOU SHOULD AVOID MAKING ANY JUDGMENTS BUT YOUR DEMEANOR SHOULD REFLECT INITIAL VIEW THAT IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO MOVE AHEAD.

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4. FOR AMBASSADOR EILTS: CLEARLY EGYPTIANS WILL SEE NO ADVANCE IN ISRAELI POSITION, AND WE WILL NOT WISH TO APPEAR AS APOLOGISTS FOR IT. HOWEVER, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT EGYPTIANS NOT TAKE ANY POSITION THAT WILL FORECLOSE OUR ABILITY TO PROCEED ON THE COURSE WE HAVE OUTLINED TO SADAT. IN OUR VIEW, THIS WILL REQUIRE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS; SADAT CANNOT BE SEEN AS UNWILLING TO NEGOTIATE. THEREFORE, PLEASE GET FOLLOWING POINTS TO SADAT IN WAY YOU CONSIDER APPROPRIATE AS PROMPTLY AS YOU REASONABLY CAN GIVEN THE HOUR THIS REACHES YOU:

-- WE APPRECIATE VP MUBARAK'S RESPONSE TO YOUR EARLIER APPROACH REPORTED CAIRO 15292.

-- SINCE THAT APPROACH, WE HAVE RECEIVED TEXT OF ISRAELI RESPONSE TO OUR QUESTIONS. AMBASSADOR LEWIS IS SCHEDULED TO SEE FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN MONDAY FOR A FULL INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT TO WAIT FOR HIS REPORT BEFORE COMPLETING OUR ASSESSMENT.

-- WE BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL, WHATEVER THE EGYPTIAN VIEW OF THE ISRAELI RESPONSE MAY BE, THAT WE LEAVE THE DOOR

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OPEN TO RESUMPTION OF TALKS SO THAT WE MAY HAVE A NATURAL FORUM IN WHICH TO ADVANCE OUR OWN IDEAS AS WE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH PRESIDENT SADAT. THUS WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT BEST LINE REMAINS THAT WE ARE CONSULTING ON NEXT STEPS.

-- BEFORE PROPOSING A DEFINITE SCHEDULE, WE WANT TO SEE AMBASSADOR LEWIS' REPORT ON HIS TALK WITH DAYAN. WE WILL THEREFORE BE BACK TO SADAT BY WEDNESDAY AND HOPE HE CAN ASSURE THAT ANY PUBLIC COMMENT ON ISRAELI RESPONSES FROM EGYPT CAN AVOID CLOSING DOOR ON RESUMPTION OF TALKS. WE APPRECIATE ACCEPTANCE IN PRINCIPLE TO ATTEND MEETINGS IN LONDON PROVIDED INVITATION COMES FROM PRESIDENT CARTER

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AND WILL BE BACK TO THEM ON THIS PROMPTLY.

5. FYI: WE WILL BE THINKING THROUGH THIS PROBLEM IN WASHINGTON, AND WOULD WELCOME YOUR VIEWS. AT THIS STAGE, IT SEEMS ESSENTIAL TO US TO AVOID U.S.-ISRAELI ARGUMENT OVER NATURE OF ISRAELI RESPONSES WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO PUT THEM INTO CONTEXT OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS.
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